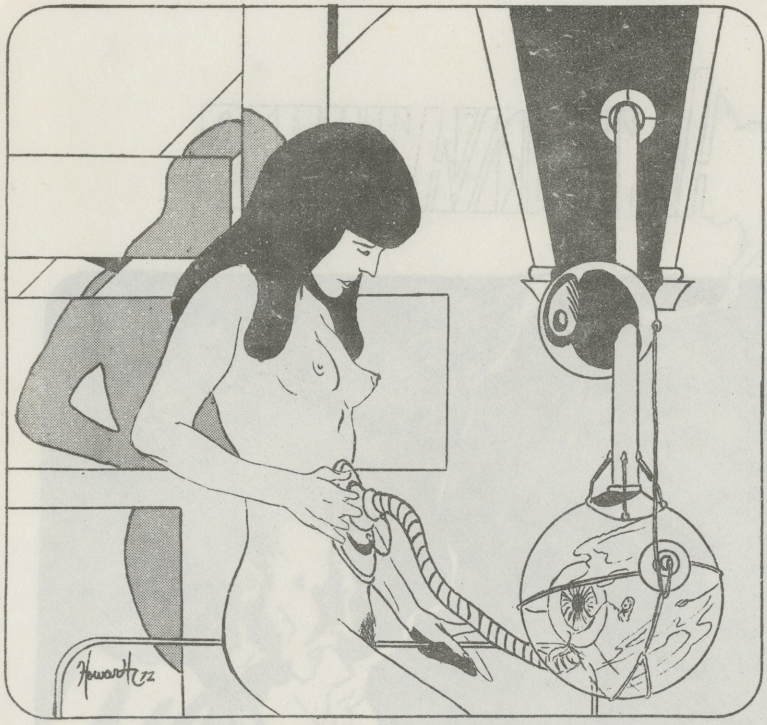
ALTERNATIVES

FEBRUARY

number: 7

—25¢—



AFTERBIRTH.....

POLICY: no zines will be reviewed unless they are sent gratis to ALTERNATIVES.
DEADLINES: any zines received by the 13th of the month will be reviewed in the following month's issue; zines received after the 13th appear one issue later.

BACK ISSUES:

#1...sold out
#2...25¢
#3...25¢
#4...25¢
#5...25¢
#6...sold out

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO..... Robert Bloch (who KNOWS what evil lurks in the hearts of men).

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

#'s 8-11.....$1.00 (overseas).....$1.50

EDITOR/ Rickey L. Shanklin

ASSOCIATE EDITOR/ Arthur Phillips

COVER ARTIST/ Matt Howarth

ABOVE LOGO/ Mat Howarth

COMIC STRIP/ Mattt Howarth

REVIEWERS THIS ISSUE/
Adamson, Phillips, Mike Rehak, Jim Rehak, Shanklin.

* RATING CODES *

0 * bird cage liner!
1 * your money...
2 * very poor
3 * poor
4 * fair
5 * good
6 * very good
7 * fine
8 * excellent
9 * buy it now, before it's sold out!

ALTERNATIVES * #7 * February * 1973 * ALL RIGHTS RESERVED *

4205½ Fitch Avenue * Baltimore * Maryland * 21236

Fanzines...

6-THE BURROUGHS NEWSBEAT * #13 * 35¢ * 4 pages * 8½x11 * offset/unstapled * mailed folded in an envelope * ERB news/discussion/trivia * Kevin B. Hancer 7710 Penn Avenue S #206, Richfield, MN, 55423 *

As usual, Kevin is doing a thorough job of gathering and compiling up-to-date news on Burroughs' work. A useful publication for the ERB completist.

This issue features an article on the Big Little Book Tarzan giveaways. It includes three reproductions from their covers, and information on several different issues.

"News Notes" is the regular feature of TBN which fills most of each issue with bits n' pieces on Burroughs' characters. Virtually anything dealing with his creations is mentioned here, from news clippings to box games. Interesting reading even if you're not an ERB fanatic.

Topping off the issue are three reviews. One, on "Bantan and the Island Goddess", is rather uninformative, but the item reviewed is new to me. A review of Famous Fantastic Adventures #1 follows, and the last item on the list is the Ghost Rider poster.

Nicely laid-out, two nice spot illoes, and very readable.

/Rickey L. Shanklin

6-THE BURROUGHS NEWSBEAT * #14 * 35¢ * 4 pages & 2 page advertisement * offset/unstapled * 8½x11 * mailed folded in an envelope * ERB news/discussion/trivia * Kevin B. Hancer, 7710 Penn Avenue S #206, Richfield, MN, 55423 *

Another nice job on TBN with three very good spot illoes by Lancaster, Caldwell and Mosher.

Preceding the "News Notes" is an informative article on Ballantine's Tarzan reissues (the ones with the new Frazetta covers). It provides a good look ahead, with inside info. Next the article goes into the Ace reissues (CORRECTION: The Ace titles have the Frazetta covers...sorry.) and discloses their plans for The Mucker series by Burroughs.

This issue Kevin has really gotten the reviews going. In this ish are reviews on "A Pictorial History Of The Silent Screen"..."The Button Book" ..."Bantan Defiant"..."Me Tanner, You Jane"..."Comics In The News"... "Burroughs Bibliophile #5"..."Erb-Ivore" (which is broken down into five issues).

Part one of an article on the Tarzan radio serial ends TBN #14. Again, a nice job, if only the price & page count would correspond!

/Rickey L. Shanklin

6-DAGON * #? * 50¢ * 28 pages * 7x8½ * offset/saddle-stitched * mailed flat in an envelope * horror movie reviews/discussion/articles/photos * Fred Ray, 13390 SW 6th Place, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 33314 *

The cover of Dagon is a beautiful black & white reproduction of the Wally Wood Weird Science-Fantasy #23 cover. Or should I say another one. I may be wrong, but I THINK E.C. published a few other covers during their brief span. And that cover is particularly out of place on Dagon, especially considering the zine's title doesn't appear until page three.

But, cover aside, the contents aren't bad. Fred needs work on his typing and overall neatness, but the material inside compensates for this.

An article (one-page) on E.C. is obviously intended for newcomers to the comic genre, so I needn't mention it. A continuing article on The Mummy is quite interesting, and deals with all aspects of the Mummy myth.

All movie zines do film reviews, and Dagon's no exception. Reviewed films are LADY FRANKENSTEIN...GODZILLA vs. THE SMOG MONSTER...GODZILLA'S REVENGE... MARK OF THE DEVIL...FROGS...ISLAND OF THE BURNING DAMNED...THE LIGHT AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD...HANNIE CAULDER...DR. JEKYLL AND SISTER HYDE...TALES FROM THE CRYPT...TWINS OF EVIL...HANDS OF THE RIPPER...and I, MONSTER. Not bad as

reviews go.

A Barbarella "foldout" would have been nice, except it wasn't halftoned. When that isn't done...well, see for yourself...

Another nice feature is one article on H.P.L. in the cinema. Well-done and well-researched.

Among the other scattered items are zine reviews, film reviews, spots, and other stuff. Even a short interview with Walter Koenig, which wastes space.

A nice zine for movie material, and film buffs.

/Rickey L. Shanklin

7-LE BEAVER * #17 * 20¢ * 15 pages * 8½x11 * mimeo/stapled at edge * mailed folded and stapled * Canadian news/events/reviews * Zine Machine, 17 Holly Road, Hampstead 254, Montreal, Quebec, Canada *

For the Canadian fan, LB is indespensible. For the State-side fan, it's expendable.

LB concentrates on Canadian news, and is the first I've seen that serves its purpose in that capacity. It is neat, carefully typed, and the printing does not detract from the overall product. Most of the news is taken from other sources, but is still direly-needed in one package such as Le Beaver.

The only lengthy sections in LB #17 are about a page long. One, a section devoted to Animation, is quite informative. The other, a report on Pariscon, is a brief look at overseas conventions.

Wholeheartedly recommended for Canadian fans; worth a try for U.S. fans.

/Richard Adamson

9-THE PASSING PARADE * #2 * 25¢/loc/trade * 21 pages * 8½x11 * mimeo/stapled at edge * mailed folded and stapled * convention review * Milton F. Stevens 9849 Tabor Street #3, Los Angeles, California, 90034 *

Every now and then, some person will do a personalized report on some event and completely capture that event on paper. Milt Stevens is one of these rare people.

His article, "Convention Pig", captures the confusions, conflicts, problems and gaities of a convention, be it science-fiction or comic. Milt has an easy style of writing that comes across as if he were speaking to you. As he tells his tale of woe, you become sympathetic with the author and begin to understand the problems anyone who enforces rules has. He balances these gloomy parts with many amusing incidents that you can't help but laugh at. (F'rinstance: did you know that the "Meet the Author" Brunch with Norman Spinrad sold only one ticket?) To finish off, he includes two pages of fanzine reviews done in his own fresh, inimitable style. If you have never been to a con, find out what you've been missing. If you're a con-goer from way back, pick up a copy...and go to the L. A. CONVENTION!

/Arthur Phillips

3-PURPLE WARP * #8-9 * 5¢+ a stamp * 16 & 31 page insert * 4¼x5½ * offset/saddle-stitched * mailed flat in an envelope * Clandestine Comic Company, 888 Asylum Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut, 06015 *

In description, I would have to compare PW to a not-too-good underground comic. PW's contents are loose, incoherent, and uninteresting at times. I would say the price is right.

The material within consists of mostly poor cartoons and illustrations, the majority of which are meaningless. The insert is a 2x2½ inch booklet which consists of bad sketches by a few pros, and poor sketches by non-entities.

Fandom's only 5¢ fanzine...with good reason.

/Richard Adamson

4-PURPLE WARP * #10 * 5¢ + a stamp * 24 pages * 4¼x5½ * offset/saddle-stitched * mailed flat in an envelope * Clandestine Comic Company, 888 Asylum Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut, 06015 *

An improvement over #8-9. This time with a one-color cover and much better interior stuff.

The art in "Folio" is good fan art, but to no end. A two-page spread of Dr. Strange, surrounded by his foes, in black & white negative, is a very nice piece of work. Other spots include mushrooms, the Flash shaving, and a detailed "mini strip" that should have had a beginning and an end.

This ish is well worth the nickel, even if a good bit of the content is worthless.

/Richard Adamson

5-SON OF GRAFAN * #22 * 25¢ * 12 pages * 8½x11 * mimeo/stapled in upper left corner * mailed folded and stapled * Graphic Fantasy and Science Fiction Society of St. Louis, 8764 New Hampshire, St. Louis, MO, 63123 *

Indespensible to St. Louis area SF, fantasy or comic fans. Current news on goings-on in St. Louis, and spotty coverage of nationwide topics.

First two pages consist of convention, radio and TV news for those who are in the area. Followed by "People" which explains where certain fans are, what they're doing, and where they're going.

"Coming Attractions" is the only goddamned news center concerning the television/movie world that I've ever found that knows what it's talking about. Slick & national mags give "hints" and "tips" that usually turn out to be cheap sensationalism and causes lots of broken hearts. Among the news herein are items on: "LIVE AND LET DIE"(the new James Bond flick) ...DIANNA RIGG...HARRY HARRISON'S "SOYLENT GREEN"..."APES" NUMBER FIVE... E.C.'s NEXT MOVIE...DR. PHIBES #3 (vs. HITLER!?!?)...etc.

The remainder of the issue is devoted primarily to reviews/news on new books, comics, and other paper-addict paraphernalia.

If only they'd put out a Son of the Son of Grafan devoted to JUST the "Coming Attractions"...

/Rickey L. Shanklin

5-SPACE AND TIME * #17 * 50¢ * 40 pages * 5½x8½ * offset/saddle-stitched * mailed flat in an envelope * Gordon Linzner, 83-10 118th Street, Apartment #4-M, Kew Gardens, New York, 11415 *

Space & Time usually contains a variety of fan products, but this is an all-fiction issue. The contents include: well-done covers by Clyde Caldwell and Kevin G. Mac Donnell, spot illos, and a few full pagers by various artists. Most of these illos are pretty nice pieces, especially those by Mark Gelotte and Dany Frolich.

And then, of course, there are five fan fictions. Of these, the first three are worthwhile reading, while the last two leave a lot to be desired.

"The Smartest Man In Town", by William L. Rupp, is a nice, readable story although it is not a too-impressive variation on an already-used theme.

"Wrecking Crew", by Darrell Schweitzer, is a very impressive variation on a previously-utilized theme. Schweitzer tells an inventive, ingenious and,(I think) thoughtful story of a man being evicted from his house, from the point of view of an "insane". Read it. Very well done and by far the best tale in the zine.

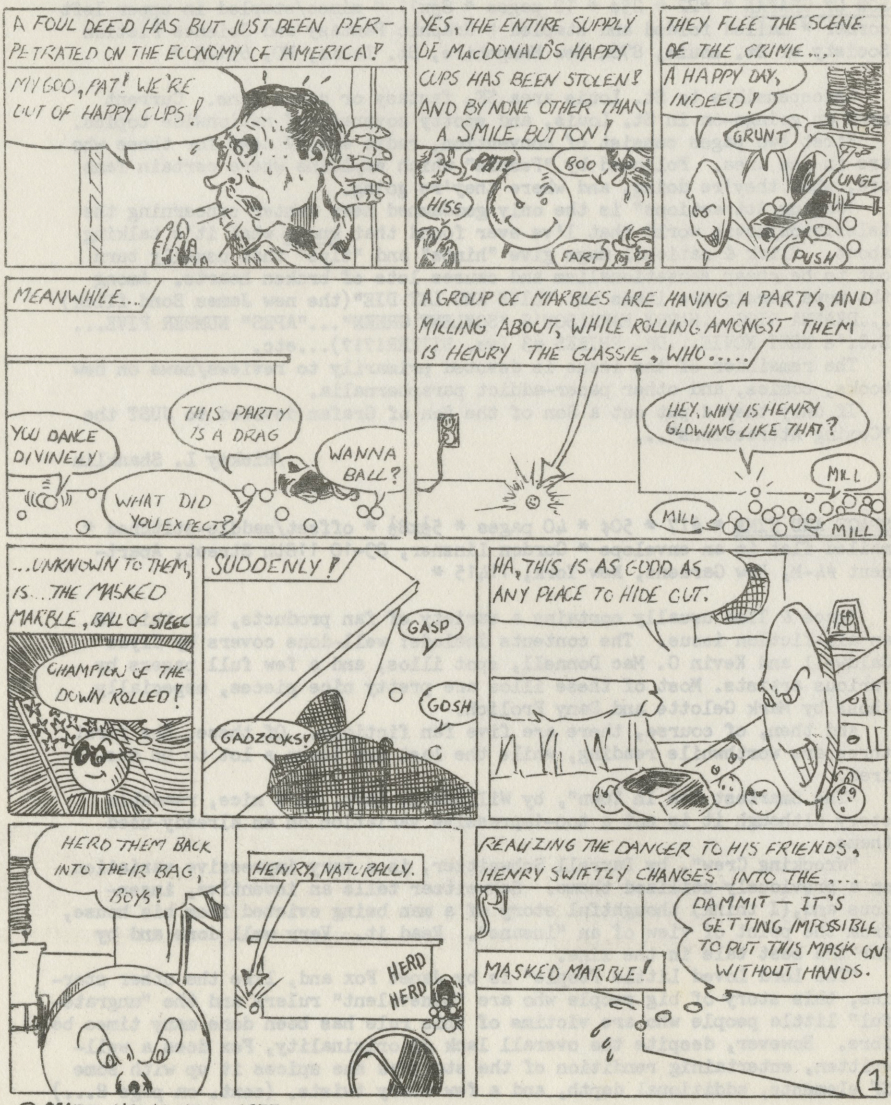
"The Lord Loved Little People" is by Janet Fox and, like the other stories, this story of big people who are "benevolent" rulers and the "ungrateful" little people who are victims of this rule has been done many times before. However, despite the overall lack of originality, Fox does a well-written, entertainig rendition of the story as she spices it up with some SF elements, additional depth, and a few story twists. (cont. on page 8...)

HOWSKI COMIX & PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS...

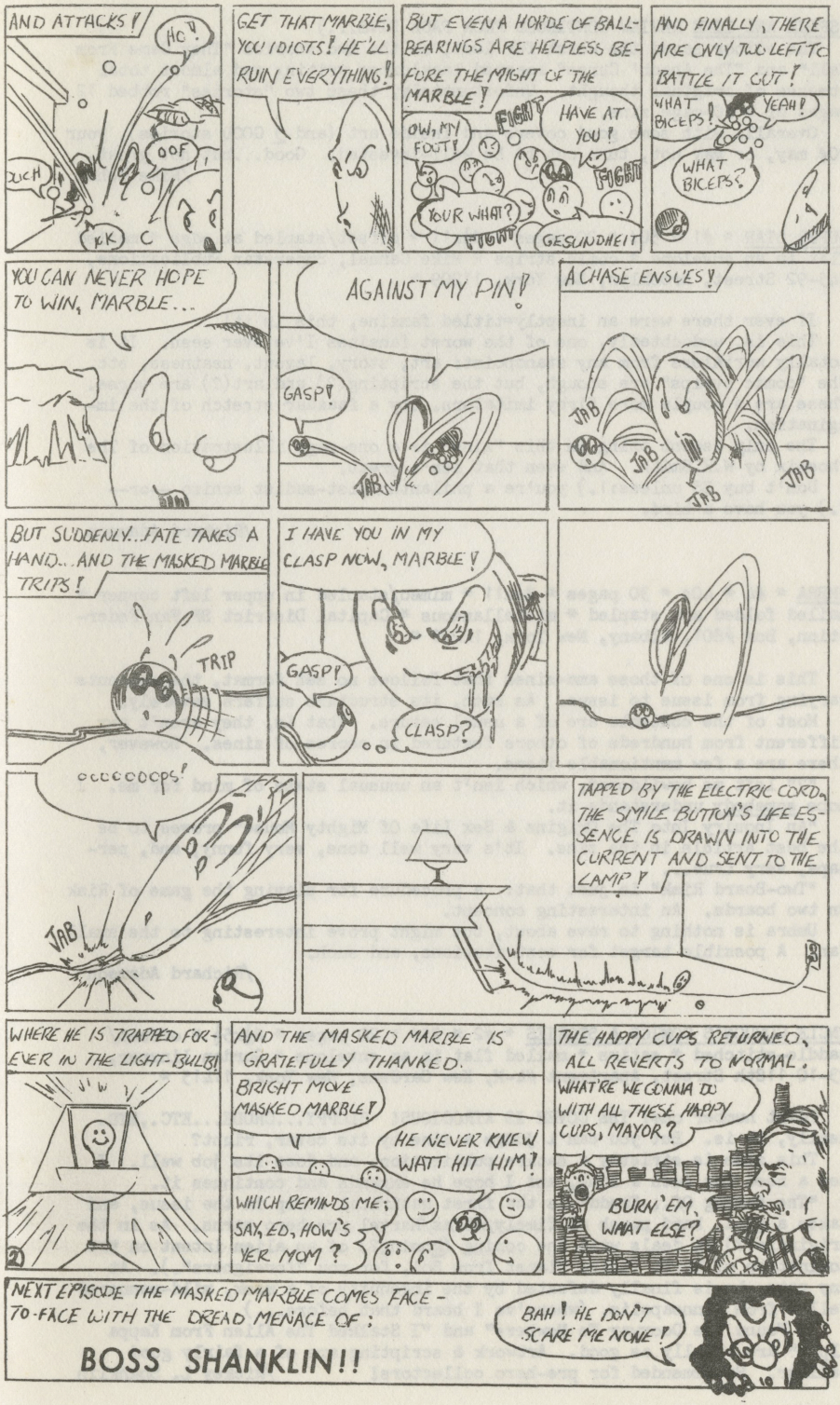
THE MASKED MARBLE IN

CREATED BY MATT HOWARTH, D.M KISTER, P. McGRATH
STORY BY MATT HOWARTH & MIKE SINBACK
ART BY HOWARTH / LETTERING BY McGRATH

"They Shoot Marbles, Don't They?"



©MATT HOWARTH 1973 A.D.


AND ATTACKS!
HO!
OUCH
OOF
KK
GET THAT MARBLE, YOU IDIOTS! HE'LL RUIN EVERYTHING!
BUT EVEN A HORDE OF BALL-BEARINGS ARE HELPLESS BEFORE THE MIGHT OF THE MARBLE!
OW, MY FOOT!
FIGHT
HAVE AT YOU!
FIGHT
YOUR WHAT?
FIGHT
GESUNDHEIT
AND FINALLY, THERE ARE ONLY TWO LEFT TO BATTLE IT OUT!
WHAT BICEPS!
YEAH!
WHAT BICEPS?
YOU CAN NEVER HOPE TO WIN, MARBLE...
AGAINST MY PIN!
GASP!
JAB
A CHASE ENSUES!
JAB
JAB
JAB
BUT SUDDENLY...FATE TAKES A HAND...AND THE MASKED MARBLE TRIPS!
TRIP
I HAVE YOU IN MY CLASP NOW, MARBLE!
GASP!
CLASP?
OOOOOOOPS!
JAB
TAPPED BY THE ELECTRIC CORD, THE SMILE BUTTON'S LIFE ESSENCE IS DRAWN INTO THE CURRENT AND SENT TO THE LAMP!
WHERE HE IS TRAPPED FOREVER IN THE LIGHT-BULB!
AND THE MASKED MARBLE IS GRATEFULLY THANKED.
BRIGHT MOVE MASKED MARBLE!
HE NEVER KNEW WATT HIT HIM!
WHICH REMINDS ME; SAY, ED, HOW'S YER MOM?
THE HAPPY CUPS RETURNED, ALL REVERTS TO NORMAL.
WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO WITH ALL THESE HAPPY CUPS, MAYOR?
BURN 'EM, WHAT ELSE?
NEXT EPISODE THE MASKED MARBLE COMES FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE DREAD MENACE OF:
BOSS SHANKLIN!!
BAH! HE DON'T SCARE ME NOWE!

(SPACE AND TIME REVIEW CONTINUED FROM PAGE FIVE...)

The editor saved the worst for last, as the two stories "They Came From Hell" and "The Apach' Curse" boasted lackluster writing and almost total absense of original thought. Unfortunately, these two "stories" robbed 12 pages of a 40-page zine.

Overall, with some good covers and inside art (and 3 GOOD stories), your 50¢ may, or may not, turn out to be well-invested. Good...but not great.

/Mike Rehak

0-SUPER STAR * #1 * 50¢ * 20 pages * 8½x11 * offset/stapled at edge * mailed flat in an envelope * comic strips * Mike Canuel, Superstar Publications, 545-92 Street, Brooklyn, New York, 11209 *

If ever there were an ineptly-titled fanzine, this is it!

This is, undoubtedly, one of the worst fanzines I've ever seen. It is totally worthless from any standpoint: art, story, layout, neatness, etc. The "comic strips" are enough, but the scripting(?) and art(?) are worse. These are a couple more Kirby imitators...by a faaaaar stretch of the imagination.

The only decent thing in this "zine" is a one-page illustration of The Phoenix by W.E.Smith. And even that isn't great.

Don't buy SS unless:1.) you're a philanthropist-sadist schizo --or-- 2.) you have a bird.

/Richard Adamson

4-UMBRA * #4 * 40¢ * 30 pages * 8½x11 * mimeo/stapled in upper left corner * mailed folded and stapled * miscellaneous * Capital District SF Fan Federation, Box #801, Albany, New York, 12201 *

This is one of those ama-zines that follows no set format, the contents varying from issue to issue. As such, its structure suffers severely.

Most of the contents are of a usual nature. That is, they aren't any different from hundreds of others featured in scores of zines. However, there are a few mentionable items.

"7" left me bewildered, which isn't an unusual state of mind for me. I hope somebody understands it.

"An Inquiry Into The Origins & Sex Life Of Mighty Mouse" proves to be the best article in the zine. It's very well done, very funny, and, perhaps, very true...

"Two-Board Risk" is just that: a procedure for playing the game of Risk on two boards. An interesting concept.

Umbra is nothing to rave about, but might prove interesting to the small fan. A possible target for contributions, and such.

/Richard Adamson

5-UNCLE GORDON'S COMICS & STORIES * #2 * 25¢ * 20 pages * 8½x5½ * offset/saddle-stitched * satire * mailed flat in an envelope * Gordon Linzner, 83-10 118th Street, Apartment #4-M, Kew Gardens, New York, 11415 *

Point number one: THE COVER IS ATROCIOUS! SLOPPY...CRUDE...ETC.,ETC. Really, it is. But you can't judge a zine by its cover, right?

This zine is strictly a satire publication, and does its job well. I see a need for such a zine, and I hope he expands and continues it.

"The Koming Of...Krudd" is the first satirical strip in the issue, and takes a good, hard punch at Timely/Atlas/Marvel pre-hero yarns. As in the originals(?) it deals with the coming (koming?) of an alien intent on the domination of Earth (third planet from Sol, for you "foreigners".). At any rate, he is finally defeated by the ingenuity of a meek, mild-mannered fellow from Minneapolis. (where've I heard that before...)

"I Found The Doorway To Nowhere" and "I Stalked The Alien From Kappa Alpha" are equally as good. Artwork & scripting are of a fairly good caliber. Recommended for pre-hero collectors! /Rickey L. Shanklin

The Tripod Trilogy...

"THE WHITE MOUNTAINS" * "THE CITY OF GOLD & LEAD" * "THE POOL OF FIRE"

If you've read John Christopher's Tripod Trilogy you will probably be surprised (and slightly puzzled) to learn that these books are listed in the JUVENILE section of most libraries. This would seem to indicate that the libraries consider these works to be immature stories instead of classic literature. If, however, we look again, we might find that this actually helps prove the trilogy's status as classics.

Before I go further, here's a very brief summary of the books for anyone who hasn't read them:

At some unknown time, aliens enslaved the earth through an advanced form of psychological warfare. Caps of fine wire mesh are placed under the skin of humans just before maturity to insure subservience. (The caps don't turn people into robots, but merely make them accept the Tripods' dominance.) The aliens are called "tripods" because the people believe the vehicles they travel in to be the actual aliens.

Will Parker is skeptical of the Tripods' right to rule and, before he can be capped, he runs away to join the underground. He eventually infiltrates one of the three alien cities and learns of the genocidal plans the aliens have for the human race.

The humans (now forewarned) mount an attack against the aliens. The first battle is lost by the humans and an attack is planned using Will and his friends.

Now a lot of people will, as the libraries did, consider this to be a sort of science-fiction version of Huck Finn. Many of the younger readers will pick it up, identify with Will, and be caught up in his adventures. But this is only one facet of the books, and a classic (like a jewel) must show many facets.

If you examine these books on a higher level, they become a study of the growing adolescent's problems as Christopher examines Will's "rites de passage." He goes on to study freedom as his characters have to decide whether or not to continue their fight, or are forced to place a value on freedom (theirs and others). He comments on society as this future world forms a new U.N. (One that lasts about thirty minutes and has the delegates leaving in anger and disgust.)

Another facet of these books is John Christopher's use of symbolism. The books would be an ideal vehicle for a study of symbolism as Christopher hardly lets a page go by without some symbol appearing. The symbols, in themselves, run the scale from blatent to subtle. (i.e.: "The White Mountains" are home for the underground. Qzymandias is the vagrant who recruits Will for the underground. Does the phrase, "Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!" help?)

Well, I think I've presented enough evidence to prove my point. If you disagree, you'd better have a better argument than "the libraries know better than I do." After all, who says those in authority are always right...

/Arthur Phillips

Movie...

DOCTOR JEKYLL & SISTER HYDE.....A HAMMER FILM.....RATED PG--R--X.....

It has been said that "a picture is worth a thousand words." Well, this is the picture! Several thousand words would not be able to convey the complexities and subtleties of this film adequately, but I shall doas best I can in the space allotted.

The story, simply stated, involves a doctor seeking the elixer of life, better known as the immortality serum. He finds that, although he is able to prolong life indefinitely with laboratory insects, there is an unforseen drawback--the recipient undergoes a sexual transition. Undaunted, he tries it on himself and--wallah--he's a woman. (Who needs Sweden & Denmark?) The actual story, in itself, is not wholly original, but the complexities in-

volved in it are. For instance, the doctor(Jekyll): he's a nice enough fellow, blinded by devotion. To concoct his serum, he requires hormones that are extracted from a "certain" female gland. This poses no problem because there's a morgue nearby. But, when the morgue runs dry, he has a stiff problem. Hence, he turns to two gentlemen by the names of Burke & Hare. Hmmmm, getting interesting? After these gentlemen "go out of business", the good doctor(ess) finds him/herself prowling the Whitechapel District of Lower East London in search of women. Oh, in case I forget to mention it, this takes place in 1888! So now, you have a combination Jekyll/Hyde...Frankenstein...Jack The Ripper. But there's more to come. The most signifigant innovation on the Jack The Ripper theme developed to date sees its birth in this flick. Dr. Jekyll/Jack the Ripper, bending down over a victim, takes out a small surgical kit! Nobody ever considered that it might have been impossible to perform his midnight surgery with just one knife. I mean, after all, doctors USUALLY use more than one scalpel in their work.

From a historical viewpoint, the flick falls flat on its face. Billboards read wrong, names are wrong, exact locations are wrong, everything is wrong concerning Jack the Ripper. Burke & Hare, at the time, were far from London...Switzerland! And they didn't manufacture transparent rubber hoses for lab equipment in 1888.

The dialogue is delightful, and was probably wasted on American moviegoers. Virtually every line carried a pun. "This is a grave situation." "I haven't been myself lately", etc. They are a literary work of art, and deserve recognition. While they do not interrupt the mood of the picture, they provide an interesting preoccupation.

The characters' motivations, for once, were clear and logical. Every action had a cause...and an effect.

Unfortunately, the version I saw was the butchered version. To get a PG rating (it was originally "X"), most of the more dramatic scenes were taken out so as not to offend the buffoons on the Maryland Censorship Board. Personally, I'd just as soon see them crawl up their assholes and pull their cheeks in behind them! /Rickey L. Shanklin

double-takes...

LORD OF THE RINGS is now an album. Bo Hansson, a young Scandinavian organist, has produced a fantastic piece of musical pleasure. His album is entitled MUSIC INSPIRED BY L.O.T.R. and features a beautiful jacket design by Jane Furst, plus an interior picture, suitable for framing, of Professor J. R. R. Tolkien. Highly recommended to those who like fine music.

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Almost definite news concerning GENE RODDENBERRY'S upcoming series. The first, QUESTER; the second, GENESIS II. (See back issues of ALTERNATIVES for further details.) No news on his other two proposed series.

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For those among you who saw the film DELIVERANCE: James Dickey, the author, played the part of the sheriff near the end of the picture.

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THE A.C.B.A. SKETCHBOOK is available for $2.50 from Doug Murray, 524 N. Hamilton Avenue, Lindenhurst, New York, 11757. Features 36 quality sketches by ADAMS, FRAZETTA, SHORES, ROYER, SINNOTT, HARPER, CHAYKIN, KALUTA, STILLWELL, COLAN, BRIDWELL, CRANDALL, WOOD, TRIMPE, ROMITA, PERLIN, APARO, STARLIN, ARAGONES, TALLARICO, KUPPERBERG, MITCHELL, MILGROM, WEISS, BRUNNER, KRENKEL, IVIE, GRAHAM, COCKRUM, BROWN, BUSCEMA, MORROW, STERANKO, and others.

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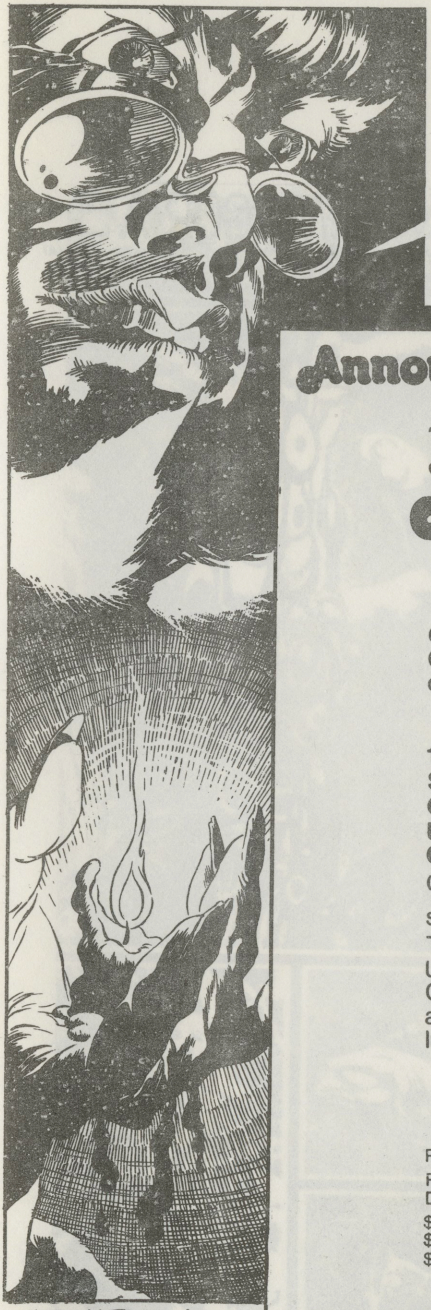
sorry I've been behind lately, I'll try to make up for it in the future.....



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A ComiConvention that others won't be able to hold a candle to (Heh-Heh)!

Announcing...

THE MARYLAND Minicon 1

Old and New Comic Books, Comic Art, and Related Material on Display and for Sale.

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Sunday, March 25, 1973
Center of Adult Education
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland
(Between Baltimore and Washington D.C.)

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The University of Maryland Comic Arts Society and the Conferences & Institutes Division

Registration:
Regular - 50¢ (Advance or at door)
Dealers - (Please Register in Advance)
$10.00 - First table
$7.50 - Second table
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Mail inquiries or Registration fees to:
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